

Practice Questions — Poetry

Read this poem, then answer the questions on the next page.

The Superstitious Ghost

I'm such a quiet little ghost,
Demure* and inoffensive;
The other spirits say I'm most
Absurdly apprehensive.



Through all the merry hours of night
I'm uniformly cheerful;
I love the dark, but in the light,
I own, I'm rather fearful.

Each dawn I cower down in bed,
In every brightness seeing
That weird, uncanny form of dread —
An awful Human Being!

Of course I'm told they can't exist,
That Nature would not let them;
But Willy Spook, the Humanist,
Declares that he has met them!



He says they do not glide like us,
But walk in eerie paces;
They're solid, not diaphanous,*
With arms! and legs! and faces!!!
They talk of 'art,' the horrid crew,
And things they call 'ambitions.'
Oh yes, I know as well as you
They're only superstitions.
And some are beggars, some are kings,
Some have and some are wanting;
They squander time in doing things
Instead of simply haunting.
But should the dreadful day arrive
When, starting up, I see one,
I'm sure 'twill scare me quite alive;
And then — oh, then I'll be one!

* demure — shy
* diaphanous — see-through

Arthur Guiterman

Practice Questions — Poetry

1 *I'm such a quiet little ghost...*
Find and copy two more words in the poem that make the ghost seem timid.

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2 What does the superstitious ghost do during the daytime?

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3 What is the superstitious ghost afraid of?

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4 Give one difference between humans and ghosts, according to the poet.

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5 *That weird, uncanny form of dread*
How does this phrase make the reader feel about human beings?

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6 *He says they do not glide like us,
But walk in eerie paces;*
Which of the following is closest in meaning to the word *eerie* in this line?

Tick **one** box.

- fearful
- strange
- unfamiliar
- realistic

7 Look at the second half of the poem.
What do you think is one of the main ideas of this section of the poem?

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